

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 109435 TOSEC 040280
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S E C R E T STATE 109435 TOSEC 040280

EXDIS, FOR HABIB AND ATHERTON IN SECRETARY'S PARTY

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, IZ, US

SUBJECT: HABIB VISIT TO IRAQ: CHECKLIST

1. SETTING: YOUR MEETINGS IN BAGHDAD WILL BE THE FIRST AT A POLICY LEVEL WITH IRAQ SINCE SECRETARY KISSINGER'S SECRET MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER SA'DUN HAMMADI ON DECEMBER 17, 1975 AT THE IRAQI AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE IN PARIS. SECRETARY KISSINGER POINTED OUT THAT, AS FAR AS THE US WAS CONCERNED, THERE WERE NO MAJOR OBSTACLES TO NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS. HAMMADI INDICATED THAT IRAQ AND THE US COULD NOT AGREE AS REGARDS IRAQ'S POSITION IN THE MIDDLE EAST, SINCE IRAQ REMAINED OPPOSED TO ISRAEL'S EXISTENCE. HE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH THE U.S., PARTICULARLY IN THE ECONOMIC FIELD, BUT WAS RELUCTANT TO MOVE TO AN EARLY RESTORATION OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. THE TWO MEN AGREED TO MEET AGAIN FROM TIME TO TIME BUT NO SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 109435 TOSEC 040280

SUCH ENCOUNTERS - EVEN AT LAST YEAR'S UNGA - COULD BE WORKED OUT.

2. SINCE THE NOVEMBER ELECTIONS, A VARIETY OF IRAQI OFFICIALS, INCLUDING HAMMADI, HAVE INDICATED TO US VISITORS TO BAGHDAD, INCLUDING SENATOR ABOUREZK, THAT THERE IS IRAQI INTEREST IN IMPROVING US-IRAQI RELATIONS. MOST SUCH IRAQI COMMENTS STOPPED SHORT OF SUGGESTING A RESTORATION OF

DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS IN THE ABSENCE OF SOME US POLITICAL

SHIFT REGARDING ISRAEL. HAMMADI ALSO REMINDED SOME VISITORS THAT MEMORIES OF US INVOLVEMENT IN THE KURDISH INSURRECTION REMAINED FRESH.

3. PROPOSED IMPROVED RELATIONS - MAJOR POINTS:

-- PRESIDENT CARTER SEEKS THE WIDEST POSSIBLE GOOD RELATIONS WITH COUNTRIES AROUND THE WORLD. WHILE WE APPRECIATE THE FACT THAT US OFFICIALS IN BAGHDAD HAVE ACCESS TO A GROWING CIRCLE OF IRAQI OFFICIALS, IRAQ AND THE PDRY REMAIN THE ONLY ARAB STATES WITH WHICH WE DO NOT ENJOY DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. FEW OPPORTUNITIES ARE OFFERED TO EXCHANGE VIEWS ON MATTERS OF MUTUAL INTEREST AT A POLICY-MAKING LEVEL. THE PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY HAVE GIVEN YOU AUTHORITY TO EXPLORE ALL AVENUES TOWARDS AN IMPROVED RELATIONSHIP WITH IRAQ, AS CONFIRMED IN THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE, WHICH YOU ARE CARRYING FOR DELIVERY TO PRESIDENT BAKR.

--THE US IS PREPARED TO RE-ESTABLISH DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS, AND WITHOUT CONDITIONS. IF THE IRAQIS ARE NOT PREPARED TO MOVE THAT FAR NOW, WE PROPOSE AN UNDERSTANDING IN PRINCIPLE TO RESUME DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS AT SOME FUTURE DATE TO BE AGREED TO LATER BY OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS. SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT WOULD RESEMBLE THAT WORKED OUT SATISFACTORILY WITH ALGERIA.

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 109435 TOSEC 040280

--IF THE IRAQIS PREFER NOT TO GO THAT FAR, WE ARE READY TO TAKE OTHER STEPS TO SECURE A MORE OPEN AND SYSTEMATIC EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON MATTERS OF MUTUAL INTEREST.

4. SPECIFICALLY:

--A. SECRETARY VANCE WOULD LOOK FORWARD TO AN EARLY MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER HAMMADI AT A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE SITE. ONE POSSIBILITY IS AT THE PARIS CIEC MEETING ON MAY 30-JUNE 1. IF HAMMADI INTENDS TO PAY A PRIVATE VISIT TO THE US THIS YEAR, SECRETARY VANCE WOULD BE PLEASED TO MEET WITH HIM THERE.

--B. WE INTEND TO CONTINUE THE PRACTICE OF ASSIGNING RELATIVELY SENIOR OFFICIALS TO HEAD OUR INTERESTS SECTION IN BAGHDAD (FYI: MARSHALL WILEY IS BEING TRANSFERRED SOON TO JIDDA AS DCM; FSO-2 CHARLES MARTHINSEN IS BEING CONSIDERED AS HIS REPLACEMENT. END FYI). WE UNDERSTAND THE PRESENT HEAD OF THE IRAQI INTERESTS SECTION IN WASHINGTON IS SCHEDULED FOR EARLY TRANSFER. WE HAVE ENJOYED GOOD RELATIONS WITH HIM; HOWEVER, THE IRAQIS MIGHT CONSIDER SENDING A MORE SENIOR IRAQI DIPLOMAT TO REPLACE HIM. A SENIOR DIPLOMAT WOULD BE WELCOMED AT THE DEPARTMENT'S SENIOR LEVELS AND WOULD HAVE BETTER ACCESS TO U.S. VIEWS.

--C. WE WOULD WELCOME IN WASHINGTON AT ANY TIME A SPECIAL EMISSARY WHOM THE IRAQIS MIGHT WISH TO SEND IN ORDER TO DISCUSS IMPROVED RELATIONS.

5. KURDISH PROBLEM AND BARZANI:

-- THE USG IS NOT RPT NOT SUPPORTING AND WILL NOT IN THE FUTURE SUPPORT KURDISH DISSIDENT ACTIVITY AGAINST THE IRAQI GOVERNMENT.

SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 109435 TOSEC 040280

-- (IF RAISED BY IRAQIS). DURING HIS TRIP TO THE US FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT IN 1976, KURDISH LEADER BARZANI ASKED THAT HE BE ALLOWED TO REMAIN IN THE US FOR A TIME. THE IRANIANS MADE CLEAR THEY WANTED HIM TO RETURN TO TEHRAN, BUT FORCING HIM TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY WOULD BE INCONSISTENT WITH US TRADITIONS. WHILE BARZANI HAS TALKED TO A GREAT MANY PROMINENT AMERICANS, HIS STAY HAS NOT ATTRACTED MUCH PUBLIC ATTENTION. ATHERTON HAS BEEN THE MOST SENIOR OFFICIAL IN THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH TO SEE BARZANI. WE HAVE GIVEN BARZANI NO RPT NO ENCOURAGEMENT. BARZANI'S MAJOR HOPE IS THAT THE IRAQI KURDS WILL SOME DAY RECOVER THE STATUS THEY ENJOYED UNDER THE MARCH 1970 ACCORD WITH THE BAGHDAD GOVERNMENT.

6. HELP FOR KURDISH REFUGEES IN IRAN:

-- OF THE SOME 35,000 IRAQI KURDS WHO ARE STILL IN IRAN, APPROXIMATELY 1400 REGISTERED WITH THE UNHCR FOR RESETTLEMENT OUTSIDE THE MIDDLE EAST. AS PART OF AN INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN EFFORT IN COOPERATION WITH THE UNHCR IN WHICH EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, CANADA, AND AUSTRALIA HAVE ALSO JOINED, THE US AGREED TO RESETTLE A SUBSTANTIAL PORTION IN THE US. THE FIRST GROUP OF OVER 300 CAME TO THE US IN 1976; BY THE END OF 1977 WE EXPECT A TOTAL OF ALMOST 700 IRAQI KURDS, OR NEARLY HALF THE 1400, WILL HAVE SETTLED IN THE US. THE UNHCR BELIEVES THIS WILL LARGELY END THE RESETTLEMENT EFFORT.

7. USG CLAIMS AGAINST IRAQ: IN 1971 THE IRAQIS SEIZED OUR EMBASSY CHANCERY AND COMPOUND, AFTER NEGOTIATIONS FOR A US SALE OF THE PROPERTY TO THE IRAQIS HAD BROKEN DOWN. THIS AREA AND BUILDINGS HAVE NOW BECOME THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. WHILE WE HAVE JUDGED THAT EARLY SETTLEMENT OF THIS CLAIM SHOULD NOT RPT NOT BE MADE A PRECONDITION FOR RESUMPTION OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS (SEE NEA MEMO OF MAY 7), IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF YOU MENTIONED IN A MATTER
SECRET

PAGE 05 STATE 109435 TOSEC 040280

OF FACT WAY TO IRAQI OFFICIAL THAT:

-- WE HOPE THAT A MUTUALLY SATISFACTORY SETTLEMENT OF THIS OUTSTANDING CLAIM CAN BE NEGOTIATED AS OUR RELATIONS IMPROVE.

8. IRAQI SUPPORT FOR TERRORIST ACTIVITIES:

(TEXTS OF OUR EXCHANGE WITH SENATOR JAVITS ON THE ROLE OF IRAQ, LIBYA, SOMALIA AND SOUTH YEMEN IN TERRORIST ACTIVITIES IS AVAILABLE AS STATE 106231 TOSEC 40155). THE IRAQI FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMAN REACTED TO THE PUBLICATION OF THE DEPARTMENT'S LETTER TO JAVITS BY ASSERTING IN EFFECT THAT IRAQ WOULD CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE AND REJECTS ALLEGATIONS THAT THIS SUPPORT COULD BE CONSIDERED AS TERRORISM. "IT REGRETS WAY IN WHICH THIS MATTER WAS RAISED."

WILEY PRESUMABLY BY NOW WILL HAVE CONVEYED FOLLOWING POINTS TO IRAQIS, BUT YOU MAY WISH TO REPEAT THAT:

-- WE WANT IRAQ TO KNOW THAT, HAVING RECEIVED INQUIRY FROM SENIOR MEMBER OF CONGRESS, WE AS EXECUTIVE BRANCH HAD OBLIGATION TO RESPOND TO SENATOR'S QUERY. OUR RESPONSE TO SENATOR JAVITS, WHICH DEALT LARGELY WITH LIBYA, WAS MATTER-OF-FACT SUMMARY OF INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO US. IT WAS NOT OUR INTENTION TO PUBLISH OUR LETTER TO SENATOR JAVITS, BUT IN OUR SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT, WE HAD NO CONTROL OVER HIS DECISION TO DO SO.

-- ATTITUDE TOWARD GROUPS WHICH REJECT PEACE SETTLEMENT WITH ISRAEL IS CLEARLY A MATTER ON WHICH WE AND GOVERNMENT OF IRAQ DIFFER. DISCUSSIONS OF THESE DIFFERENCES WOULD BE POSSIBLE IN THE MORE OPEN AND NORMAL RELATIONSHIP WE DESIRE.

SECRET

PAGE 06 STATE 109435 TOSEC 040280

(NOTE - FYI: WE HAVE ACQUIRED INTELLIGENCE IN RECENT DAYS THAT THE IRAQIS MAY HAVE DECIDED TO CURB THE ACTIVITIES OF ABU NIDAL, LEADER OF RENEGADE FATAH GROUP MENTIONED IN OUR CORRESPONDENCE WITH JAVITS. THIS DECISION, IF TRUE, MAY HAVE STEMMED FROM STILL CONFIDENTIAL JORDANIAN AND SYRIAN EFFORTS TO COME TO A BETTER UNDERSTANDING WITH IRAQ. END FYI).

9. FEDERAL ANTI-BOYCOTT LEGISLATION:

IN THE RECENT PAST IRAQI GOVT AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS HAVE PRAGMATICALLY ALTERED OR ADJUSTED BOYCOTT LANGUAGE ON TENDERS, BUSINESS CONTRACTS, AND BANKING DOCUMENTS IN ORDER TO ACQUIRE THE GOODS OR SERVICES THEY HAVE SOUGHT FROM US

SOURCES. SOME IRAQI OFFICIALS, HOWEVER, HAVE RECENTLY INDICATED DIRECTLY AND INDIRECTLY TO US THAT IRAQ MIGHT WELL RETALIATE AGAINST U.S. FEDERAL ANTI-BOYCOTT LEGISLATION NOW BEING CONSIDERED, POSSIBLY TO THE EXTENT OF CURBING THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR AMERICAN FIRMS TO PARTICIPATE IN IRAQ'S SIZEABLE NEW ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.

TALKING POINTS:

--WE DO NOT CHALLENGE ANY COUNTRY'S EXERCISE OF ITS SOVEREIGN RIGHT TO CONDUCT A PRIMARY BOYCOTT OF ANOTHER COUNTRY, TO PREVENT SHIPMENTS OF ITS GOODS THROUGH THE PORTS OF ITS ADVERSARIES, AND TO CONTROL ITS OWN IMPORTS AND EXPORTS. OUR PROBLEM HAS BEEN WITH THE SECONDARY AND TERTIARY ASPECTS OF THE ARAB BOYCOTT. THE PROPOSED LEGISLATION IS AIMED AT PREVENTING AMERICAN FIRMS OR INDIVIDUALS FROM IMPLEMENTING FOREIGN SECONDARY AND TERTIARY BOYCOTTS AGAINST COUNTRIES WITH WHICH WE HAVE FRIENDLY RELATIONS.

--AT THE SAME TIME, THE NEW LEGISLATION REFLECTS THE STRONG DESIRE OF THE U.S. TO MAINTAIN POSITIVE RELATIONS WITH ALL
SECRET

PAGE 07 STATE 109435 TOSEC 040280

MIDDLE EAST COUNTRIES. IT HAS BEEN DEVELOPED IN CONSULTATION WITH U.S. FIRMS THAT WISH TO TRADE WITH ARAB STATES.

--WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THE NEW ANTI-BOYCOTT LEGISLATION SHOULD PRECLUDE IRAQ FROM CONDUCTING BUSINESS WITH AMERICAN FIRMS.

10. MIDDLE EAST ISSUES:

IN REVIEWING WITH THE IRAQIS OUR POSITION TOWARDS A MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT, YOU MIGHT PROBE TO SEE HOW FIRMLY THEY ARE WEDDED TO SUPPORT OF THE REJECTIONIST POSITION. THERE IS SOME RECENT EVIDENCE THAT IRAQ WANTS TO ESTABLISH A BETTER RELATIONSHIP WITH THE NON-REJECTIONIST PALESTINIAN LEADERSHIP (ARAFAT), WHICH CONCEIVABLY COULD FORESHADOW SOME SOFTENING OF THE IRAQI POSITION. CHRISTOPHER

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